

James Madison to Benjamin Waterhouse, July 13, 1825. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900-1910.

TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE. MAD. MSS.

Montpr. July 13, 1825.

Dr. Sir I have recd. your friendly letter of June 30, and congratulate you on your safe return from so long a journey. The fact you confirm with respect to Gen: Hull furnishes the best apology for the imbecility which occasioned his downfall; and his friends would shew more discretion in availing themselves of it, than in attempts to decorate him with artificial laurels. I am truly sorry for the injury sustained by our friend, Genl. Dearborn; whose character forms such a contrast to that of the Mock Hero of Detroit.¹ I hope, as I am sure you wish, that your ominous inferences may be followed by

¹ The apoplectic attack & its effect as related by Dr Waterhouse should be extracted from his letter and accompany this.— *Madison's Note*. Waterhouse wrote June 30th from Cambridge:

“You may have seen in the papers that the miserable General H[ull] has been treated with a public dinner; at which presided a son of the late worthy Govr. Sullivan, and nephew to the General—a degenerate plant of a strange (foreign) vine—the bitterest, & most inveterate of the whole high-federal gang—a man notorious for having dishonored his Father and his Mother, and who had doubtless congenial feelings with the military convict.

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"I mentioned that Hull had a stroke of apoplexy, a year, perhaps, before his appointment of General on the Canada expedition. I have refreshed my memory since I came home, and therefore repeat, that a few miles from my house, at a review of the Middlesex militia, whereof the late Speaker General Varnum was commanding officer, General Hull fell senseless, and, if I recollect rightly, was carried home in that condition; from which time, he never appeared to be the man he was before, insomuch that I remember people spoke of it, when his appointment was announced.—The gallant General Miller called on me yesterday when we refreshed each other's memories on the events of Hull."— *Mad. MSS.*

a proof that his case is an exception to the general rule which suggested them.

You ask whether you are too old or too deficient in political information for public service abroad. To the latter question, none, I presume would say no; and, judging from what I have seen, I could not give a different answer to the former. If there be precedents of an adverse sort, there are so many on the favorable side, that every individual case ought at least to be decided on its own merits. In such an appeal, you will doubtless find better testimony than mine, in those more free from a suspicion of chronological sympathies with three score and ten.

Mrs M. desires me to express for her the respectful & cordial sentiments with which your interesting conversations inspired her, and to include her in all the good wishes, which I tender you with the assurances of my great esteem